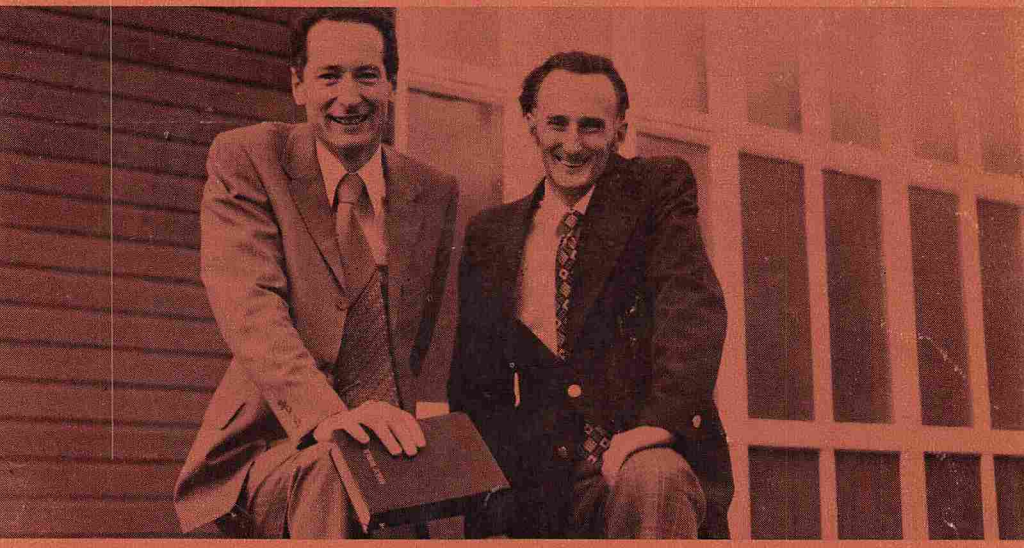
REFORM-ATION TODAY '78



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NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Regretfully it has been necessary to raise the subscriptions as follows:

	1 year	2 years
Australia & N.Z.	$4.50	$7.50
South Africa	R4.00	R7.50
USA & Canada	$6.00	$11.00

The UK subscriptions have been raised recently but are likely to go up £2.50 for one year or £4.50 for two years.

Most of the books recommended in the article on page 18 are paperback. This is reflected in the prices. The total cost for all the books recommended for the advanced Christian's basic library is formidable. The prices of books are increasing so rapidly that they may go up before you can turn to page 30!

Those who cannot afford some of the more expensive books recommended can obtain them from The Evangelical Library which provides an excellent lending service. If you are in the London area you will find a warm reception at the Library 78a Chiltern Street, just off the Baker Street Tube Station. Mr. Micklewright featured above is one of the staff members whose knowledge of books and their whereabouts is prolific.

Editorial

The Life of Faith magazine and Mr. A. W. Pink

FOR MANY YEARS MR. HERBERT STEVENSON EDITED THE *Life of Faith* MAGAZINE. Until this year the paper was produced as a weekly. Now as a monthly Mr. Chris Spencer is the editor with Mr. Stevenson in an advisory capacity. The July issue included a review (perhaps 'assault' would be a better description) by Mr. Stevenson of the Letters of Mr. A. W. Pink published by the Banner of Truth. Mr. Pink's eccentricities are hammered by Mr. Stevenson, particularly his most glaring sin of intolerance. It would be foolish to dismiss Mr. Pink without coming to terms with his unusual contribution in the field of expository literature. In his own way Mr. Stevenson is just as intolerant as he seldom misses an opportunity to oppose Calvinism.

True and false Calvinism

The aim of this editorial is not to indulge further in the polarisation that hinders rather than helps the unity of the body of Christ. It is rather to point to the fact that there needs to be concern about Calvinism. We have to confess that a great deal of merely academic or scholastic Calvinism has been perpetuated in the world. In addition there is the evil of hyper-Calvinism. It is understandable then that some tend to react against every form of Calvinism. Mr. Stevenson refers with contempt to neo-Puritans. Mr. Pink's letters, he suggests, are for such types only.

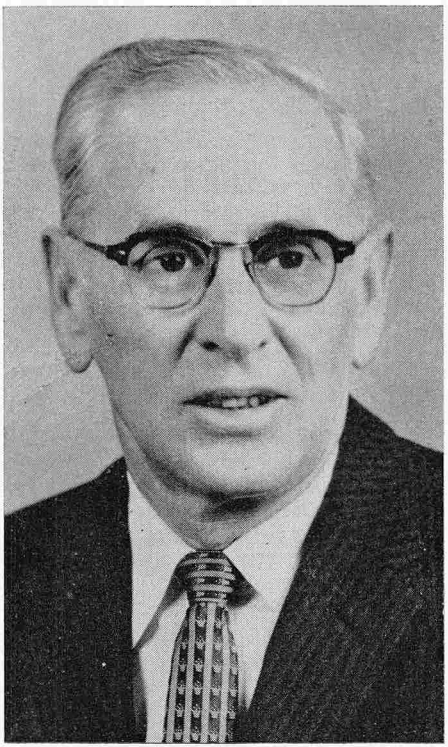
This issue of *Reformation Today* is devoted mainly to this subject. The article Are we on the Right Track? discusses the kind of Calvinism emerging today. The biography of Rolfe Barnard provides an outstanding example of a Calvinist evangelist who was rejected by most of the evangelical leaders of his day because of his doctrine. The exposition, Did Christ Come to Save the Whole World? demonstrates that in respect to their responsibility Christ did indeed come in that way. While the atonement is limited with regard to its effectual accomplishment other benefits that accrue from it must be reckoned with. In precise theological style these vital matters have been stated by Prof. John Murray available now in his *Collected Writings*, vol. 1, items 9, 18 and 20 and vol. 2 item 10, which expositions are warmly commended.

Australia

The editor is due to leave on a preaching tour of Australia for four weeks as from 19th September. Recently planted churches in Australia need our prayerful support.

Cover picture. Geoff Thomas of Aberystwyth was the preacher at the opening of the new building of the Caterham Baptist Church which is situated just a few miles off the M23 motorway south of London. Richard Chester (right) is the pastor. About ninety percent of the construction work was done by members of the church. The total cost for building and furnishings was £24,000. The value of the labour contributed is reflected by the fact that the building is now insured for £95,000. The emphasis at Caterham is on expository preaching and evangelism. Contact with the local inhabitants is good and many came to view the building on opening day. The church is governed by elders. Growth has been steady. There have been problems which is typical in places where progress is being made. In these days there is no room for triumphalism or for pessimism. Churches like Caterham have emerged in many parts of the country. Advance has not been spectacular but nevertheless there is every reason for encouragement. Further photos are printed on the back inside cover.

Evangelist Rolfe Barnard 1904-1969



Rolfe Barnard

By John F. Thornbury

Compiled from his own personal recollections and taped sermons, especially 'Saved from Infidelity' and 'Watching Men Die,' Barnard's Sermon Notes and from correspondence with his daughter, Mrs. R. C. Moser, of Clemmons, North Carolina.

I WELL RECALL WHEN ROLFE BARNARD FIRST CAME TO MY HOME TOWN, Ashland, Kentucky. It was the spring of 1950. I was a teenage boy and attended, along with my mother, younger sister and brother, a large Baptist Church. It was one of the most influential churches in Eastern Kentucky with a membership of about 1,000. Some way, I do not recall how, they scheduled Rolfe Barnard to come and speak.

In those days evangelistic services were conducted annually, sometimes more often. They were known as 'revival meetings'. Some of the most prominent evangelists in America came to our church. Evangelistic services were extravaganzas: there was almost a 'show biz' atmosphere. They featured fancy musicians, former boxers, convicts and

entertainers as speakers, and all kinds of gimmicks and goodies for the youth. Aeroplane rides were offered for those who brought enough people to church and there were rewards for those who induced others to walk down the church aisles after the sermons. It was the big boom and everyone seemed to enjoy it. I do not recall there being much permanent good effect of these 'revivals'. After all the excitement died down people usually went about their sinful ways of living as before.

Like all the guest-evangelists who came, the picture of Barnard was placed on posters and nailed all over town. Beneath his picture was an interesting slogan, it said, 'The Evangelist who is different.' Exactly what was different about him the posters did not say. The man looked to be in his late forties. The only thing noticeably different about his appearance was that he came across as somewhat sombre—there was a slightly menacing look on his face. Normally, evangelists had broad smiles and shining faces advertising the jolly good fellows they were.

After a few sermons in the church, folk knew just how different Rolfe Barnard was from the evangelists who had visited the church before. There was none of the flashy demeanor, but a grave and dignified bearing like one who had been sent on a mission. One soon got the impression that he was not there to whip up religious excitement but to deliver a message from God.

The message was as startling as it was different. It centred around the *character of God*, a God about whom most had never heard before. The deity most were acquainted with was a nice sort of fellow who did his best to save people, but was often frustrated in the attempt. Many times I have heard preachers say, 'God has done all he can for you, now it is up to you.' I used to listen with astonishment to this statement, for I wondered why I should seek help from a being who could not help me. Barnard, on the other hand, preached a God who was sovereign and omnipotent, one who dispensed his mercy according to his own discretion. He preached that sinners were not to come to God with the idea of helping him out of his dilemma, but they were to come as guilty sinners, suing for mercy. He exalted the holiness of God and the strictness of his law. This, you can be sure, was different.

Rumours began to spread all over town that a Calvinist had come to Ashland. Some reacted with amazement, some with confusion, others with down-right anger. But a small group rejoiced and said, 'We have been wanting to hear this for years.' My father, who believed in the doctrines of grace, started attending the services and announced to all of us that there was one at the church preaching the theology in which he believed.

The pastor, after much heart searching and Bible study, came to believe in the doctrines of grace as a result of this meeting and invited Barnard

back in the summer of 1951 to hold a tent meeting in a large park down town. In the intervening months a division developed over the so called 'five points' of Calvinism with the majority becoming more hostile. The pastor was a very talented and gracious man with a winsome personality, and he tried to woo as many as possible to the 'new' view, but most stiffened and gave him trouble.

The church had a very active youth group, including a choir. I was a member of this choir and also sang in a quartet with others about my age. I had been baptised at the age of 12 but was utterly without any vital relationship to God in my life. There was in fact a terrible, aching void in my heart which I could not understand. Still, I did not even want to consider that I was not a Christian.

The two-week meeting in the park was a memorable event. The crowds were fairly large, considering the type of preaching which was sounding out. Barnard boldly preached the gospel as he understood it, often denouncing the superficiality of modern religion. We were all fascinated with his style, though he seemed awfully stern and rough. Plain truths of the word of God were set forth, even the harshest, in their naked reality. One of his favourite texts was 'God will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy.'

Shortly after the meetings started, there began a breaking up. Many, mostly adults, began to go forward after the messages and state publicly that they were lost and wanted prayer. These, and others who sat trembling in the audience, were under 'conviction of sin'. The amazing thing is that most of them were church members. I remember one night the piano stopped playing during the invitation and the pianist went to the front seat and sat down sobbing. We all knew she meant that she wanted to be saved. Prominent church leaders such as deacons, Sunday School teachers, and youth workers began to acknowledge that they had been false professors or deceived about their state before God. Our male quartet was singing each night under the big tent, and as it turned out later not one of us was converted at the time. One night Don, one of the members of the quartet, went to the front where the pastor and evangelist were standing and asked for prayer. It was announced that he was lost and needed Christ. It was at this point that I became involved in the picture, God was about to set me straight.

At that time I had the notion that anyone who had any religious feelings such as 'seeking after God' was a true Christian. I misunderstood the text in Romans which says that there is none that seeketh after God. At any rate, it rankled me somewhat that my friend had been disturbed by the evangelist. At this very time my own soul was torn asunder because I had no real assurance of salvation, but I had a reputation of being a young theologian who believed in Calvinistic doctrine. I thought this

would be a good time for me to show my skill in counselling and to help my friend who was in trouble.

I went to the front of the tent where Barnard and the pastor were talking to Don. Butting in like the immature, upstart youth I was, I said to him, 'Don, you do not need to worry. You are seeking God. The lost man does not seek God. Therefore you have the life of God in you, you are saved,' or words to that effect. Never, till the day I die, will I forget what Rolfe Barnard said to me. Looking straight at me with his piercing eyes he said, 'Young man, a believer is not seeking Christ, he has *found* Christ.'

Ten pointed arrows piercing my body, or a jolt of electricity would not have shaken me more than those words. Barnard had not only corrected a false notion which would have led Don astray but also he put his finger on a raw nerve in my own life. With this statement, through the work of the Holy Spirit in my heart, he stripped aside the shroud of pseudo-religion in which I had been hiding and left me standing exposed to my true condition. I did not know Christ.

I was angry. As my parents drove home I said little, but within I was seething as I resisted the pricklings of the Holy Spirit on my conscience. Was this abrasive preacher right? Was it true that seeking is not enough, one must actually find Christ? If so, I knew I was lost, a fact I did not want to face. That night I told my mother that I wanted her to pray for me, because I thought I might not be saved. I expected her to have some words of comfort, for after all I was a good boy, supposedly, one of the model young men in the church. She had no soothing balm for me, but only said, 'Son, I'll pray for you.'

What went on in the next 24 hours would take many pages to tell, but briefly I will say that I spent the most miserable night of my life that night wrestling with the condition of my soul. The next morning, somewhat humbled, I told the pastor and the evangelist (there were morning services) that I was lost. I recall well the pastor's words. He said, 'John, this is not surprising, since most of our best young people are coming to realise that they have never had a real experience of grace.' There were no words of counsel given me except these, 'God saves sinners.' This is all that was said to me about how to get relief. This seemed like a brush off, but I went away. Before the day was over God used the words of the song, 'Jesus Paid It All,' to bring peace to my heart. Through this song, Christ and his substitutionary work came before my mind. The Holy Spirit seemed to be telling me that it was for me that Jesus had died, and that all my sins were put away forever. That night I joyfully confessed Christ to the crowd and later was baptised, along with twenty or so others who were converted in the tent meeting.

I have given this first-hand account of Barnard's ministry in one city because it illustrates in a capsule way the leading elements of his evan-

gelistic preaching. What happened in the church in Ashland is a sample of what occurred in dozens of places throughout America and parts of Canada. While different churches and communities responded differently to Barnard's preaching, there were many instances in the 1950s and 1960s especially where churches were claimed for truth and many sinners were converted. According to an article written by R. T. Kendall in 1969 shortly after Barnard's death, Barnard estimated that about 100,000 people professed faith in Christ during his forty years of preaching.

Early life

Rolfe Pickens Barnard was born on 4th August 1904 to James and Julia Barnard in Guntersville, Alabama. He often stated that his father and mother gave him to God to be a preacher while he was still in his mother's womb. He grew up in a godly home and was taken to a Southern Baptist church and Sunday School during his youth. Like so many children, he made a decision to be baptised and join the church when very young, but without being truly converted. When he was eleven years old, a missionary visited the church in the little town where he lived and asked all who were willing to 'go wherever the Lord wanted them to go' to come forward. Soon Rolfe was walking down the aisle and made this commitment. He seemed to sense from that time that God's will for him was the Christian ministry.

In a remarkable sermon entitled 'Saved From Infidelity,' Barnard explains how he struggled with the seemingly inevitable course to which he was destined: preaching the gospel. He was evidently a precocious youth for he entered Hardin Simmons University of Abilene, Texas at the age of 15 to study for a legal career. While in college he sought peace with God for his troubled conscience, but whenever he thought of God he thought of preaching, and this he had rejected. He was willing to do anything but that. He evaded the issue by long hours of weeping and praying. He 'rededicated himself to God', in fact he did 'everything he knew to do'. But the storm within continued to rage. Rolfe was in a terribly agitated state.

Then his rebellion reached a point where he said 'God, keep your hand off me.' His heart hardened and he turned to infidelity. This, as he said, gave him an 'alibi' or 'hiding place' and 'enabled him to sleep'. His determination to avoid the ministry led him to abandon the evangelical faith (outwardly at least). He became an outspoken infidel on the college campus and his bold disposition and intellectual acumen made him a natural leader of the unbelievers. An infidel club was organised and he was its president. Rolfe Barnard had declared all-out war on God!

On Friday nights 300 young rebels gathered to poke fun at the Bible and

dare God to do anything about it. Leading them in their blasphemy was a tall, angular youth who had been dedicated to God as a minister from his mother's womb. When this young man was leading the skeptics he was haughty and presumptuous, but at night, when alone, the God of his parents loomed large before him and the gathering clouds of his wrath frightened him. Remarkably, he would curse God during the day and pray to him at night. These are his own words, 'I say to you, and this is the truth, before I could sleep at night I'd get down on my knees and say to God, 'If you'll not kill me tonight, I'll surrender to you tomorrow.' Rolfe Barnard became, literally, one of the most miserable men walking the face of the earth. He was a hard and bitter young man, determined never to serve God or even darken the doors of God's house.

On graduating from law school, he was offered a junior partnership in an outstanding Texas law firm, but instead he decided to move to the Panhandle area of Texas to teach in a school. He did not explain this move. In Texas, at that time, one had to be a church member in order to teach in a school, so he joined the church the first Sunday after moving to town.

Although he was now a church member, he never attended. In fact he remained a confirmed infidel. 'For years,' he said, 'I blasphemed everything high and low, but they kept me on the church roll.' When he moved from one place to another he moved his letter of membership, but never participated in church activities. Then a remarkable thing happened. A church elected him to teach a men's Bible class, shortly after he had joined, and he felt that to keep his reputation he should accept.

The incredible situation existed of Rolfe Barnard moving into a new community and being elected to teach a men's Bible class while he was shaking his very fist in the face of God. This type of situation is perhaps more common than one might suspect, especially in some parts of America where membership in a church is essential to social status, and in some cases one's occupation depends upon it. As a Bible teacher, Barnard was a big success. The people were impressed with his knowledge of the Bible and ability to communicate. After he became an evangelist, he described himself during those days as a 'hypocrite' and 'devil'.

Conversion

Then the event occurred which forced Barnard's hand, as it were, in the great issue between him and God: whether he would surrender to preach. The pastor of the church resigned, and Sunday after Sunday there was no preaching. After Sunday School the people simply went home. Given the battle in his heart he had been fighting for so many years, this created a dilemma in Barnard's mind too great for him to bear. One Sunday he went home to his boarding house, entered the bathroom and locked the

door. There, as he later said, 'The battle was fought out.' God won. Rolfe Barnard got up from his knees and went directly across town to the home of the Sunday School Superintendent who was asleep in a rocking chair waiting for dinner. On a table a gramophone was grinding out some music. The young Sunday School teacher walked over to the Superintendent and woke him. 'Brother Mills,' he said, 'I've come to tell you, the Lord has saved me and I want to preach next Sunday.' I will let Barnard relate the conversation between him and the layman in his own words.

> The Superintendent said, 'Well, it's about time.' He sure let me down. I had wanted him to say, 'Oh, isn't that wonderful.' Instead he said, 'Well it's about time.' I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'Well we have been waiting and waiting to see when it was going to take place.' He said, 'Things have been going on. A couple of letters came to Panhandle, Texas post office. One of them was addressed to the Superintendent of the Sunday School of the First Baptist church. The other was addressed to the Pastor—"didn't know any names". They were identical letters. Some old white-haired woman from Abilene, Texas said, "My boy's coming to your town to teach school. He's called to be a preacher. He's not even saved. He's in an awful mess." She said, "If you could find it in your heart, build a fire under him. Don't let him have a moment's peace." And he said, "Boy we've been doing it. We knew you weren't saved, but we elected you to teach a men's Bible class. We've been meeting once a week and asking, "Lord make the fire a little hotter." We've been waiting.'

The letters had come, of course, from Rolfe's mother. The method the Texan Baptists used to build a fire under Rolfe Barnard was a strange one, and one we could easily criticise, but God moves in a mysterious way and overruled the mistake of his people in calling out his chosen servant and sending him on his way.

First Preaching

It was while he was still a school teacher that Barnard moved to Borger, Texas, to do evangelistic work. Borger was one of those boom Texas oil towns. Oil was discovered one day on a man's ranch, and within six months tens of thousands of people had flooded into the community and built a town. As in the famous gold rush of the 1850s, people came there from everywhere to get rich quick.

Various types of businesses sprang up, but there was not one church in town. Saloons, gambling halls and houses of ill-fame flourished. Public women swarmed on the main street which was two-and-a-half miles long. According to Barnard, uninterested men had to walk at arm's length from the buildings in order to avoid being grabbed.

The Baptist Association in that part of the country bought an empty lot and commissioned Barnard to start a church on it. He did not have a cent so he went up and down the streets collecting money to build a church structure. A Baptist deacon rebuked him for this method, stating that he was soliciting the devil's money. Barnard answered, 'Satan doesn't own anything. All is the Lord's.'

One of the businesses he intended to solicit was the one operated by A. P. Borger who 'owned the town'. When he got there he found several deputy sheriffs waiting for him, along with a photographer from the local newspaper. The sheriffs were 'dressed in ten-gallon hats and wearing two handguns'. He was informed that no money would be collected at that business until they had been given a sample of his preaching. Barnard immediately stepped upon a large beer keg and delivered a message on 'death'. The essence of this message was that those present were going to die physically, and if they remained outside Christ their souls would die eternally. The photographer took Barnard's picture while he was preaching. The next day the Texas newspapers showed the young minister standing on the keg preaching to this unusual audience.

Death was an appropriate subject, for death was all around him. A lethal gas from the oil wells destroyed the lungs of many who worked them. In a short time scores succumbed to 'gas consumption' for which there was then no cure. In a gripping message entitled, 'Watching Men Die,' Barnard states that he preached at as many as seven funerals in one day. The bodies of the dead were usually taken back to their own home towns for burial. He also tells about several frightful death-bed scenes of people who listened to him preach but rejected Christ.

Such were some of the circumstances of Barnard's ministry in Borger, Texas. It was a frontier situation in every sense of the word. He preached to rough, tough, hardened sinners. His converts consisted of drunkards, gamblers, prostitutes and money sharks, as well as ordinary people. I believe that one can understand better Barnard's 'shoot from the hip' style from the pulpit if the way he began his ministry is taken into consideration. He made a good evangelist to rebels for he himself had been a rebel before his conversion.

Seminary

On 25th October, 1927, Barnard married Hazel Hayes Hilliard at Amarillo, Texas. In January of the next year he enrolled in the Southwestern Baptist Seminary at Fort Worth, Texas. This school was founded in 1905 by B. H. Carroll, who like Barnard was a hardened infidel before his conversion. Dr. Carroll, though he never attended Seminary himself, was a giant in every respect. He was thoroughly orthodox, a brilliant scholar and a commanding preacher.

When Barnard went to Southwestern, it was the period of the beginnings of the erosion of traditional Southern Baptist theology. The emphasis, so conspicuous since, on programmes and fund raising, and the downgrading of theology was showing itself. On the faculty at the time was W. T. Conners, whom Barnard often quoted with great respect and appreciation. Conners was a mild Calvinist and wrote several books on doctrine. Barnard also studied under the famous Southern Baptist Evangelist, L. R. Scarborough, a very influential figure.

Unquestionably, Barnard's ministry was moulded by his instruction at Southwestern. But this does not account for the direction his preaching took, especially in the 1950s and 1960s.

Upon graduating from Seminary, Barnard pastored churches in Portales, New Mexico; Denton, Texas and Wetumka in Oklahoma. When the Second World War broke out, he became a chaplain and served in this capacity for two years.

Barnard's Style and Methodology

I do not believe that Barnard was a Calvinist during the first years of his pastoral work and evangelistic ministry. Judging from his sermon notes, however, he was always thoroughly evangelical and biblical in his preaching. As far as his style is concerned, I think anyone who heard him and knows about the personality and ministry of C. G. Finney, an American evangelist of another day, could not but see a considerable resemblance.

He often quoted Finney, and there are statements in his older sermon notes which indicate that he held, at one time, to Finney's views on man's will. But even so, Barnard, so far as I can tell, never countenanced the 'easy believe' type of evangelism which has predominated in America in this century.

Some of the so-called 'new methods' of Finney he employed in his revival preaching. He usually gave a public invitation after his sermons, though I am not sure that this always pertained. He did this, however, not as a means of salvation but as an opportunity for the converted to openly profess faith in Christ. He was known at times to single out specific individuals for notice from the pulpit, particularly if they were opposing him. This was a well-known tactic of Finney.

One is reminded that, in every age when God is bringing about a reformation of some kind, he uses all types of individuals, including those who seem, to some, tactless and blunt. When the tide of error and compromise is flowing all one way, very outspoken and forceful personalities arise to stand against the current. Such were Savonarola, Martin Luther and Spurgeon. Barnard was in this tradition.

Theological Development

Like many before him, such as Asahel Nettleton and A. W. Pink, Barnard believed that submission to Christ was an essential element of conversion. There were no words too scornful for him to use in denouncing the view that one can become a Christian by accepting the finished work of Christ while living in rebellion against him. Throughout his ministry he was one of the few American evangelists who taught that sanctification is an *essential* part of being a believer. The 'Carnal Christian' theory has prevailed to a tremendous extent in the USA this century. This had led to some professing believers living lives of open sin and disobedience. That error was anathema to Rolfe Barnard. In this sense he always belonged to the Puritan school on conversion.

In 1946 he moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, to teach at Piedmont Bible College. Although he was then, and always remained, a Southern Baptist, his tenure at this school brought him into close fellowship and association with some of the leaders of the independent, fundamentalist movement in America, such as Dr. John R. Rice. Dr. Rice wields immense influence among fundamentalists in America, and is an outspoken opponent of modernism and liberalism.

This writer can give little detail about Rolfe Barnard's tenure at Piedmont Bible College. Barnard's independence of thought and freelance style probably made teaching in a school unnatural for him. His stay at Piedmont therefore was not long. But he did gather about him a number of admiring young preachers and many were blessed by his teaching.

During the late forties, Barnard combined evangelistic meetings, such as city-wide crusades, with Bible conferences. At one of these conferences at Greenville, Mississippi, he preached from the sixth chapter of John and in his message he revealed that he had come to a Calvinist view on election. Present at the conference were Dr. Rice and other personalities in the fundamental camp.

There were some in the audience who were, or came to be, sympathetic with his exposition, but most were vehemently opposed to it. This conference became a sort of pivotal point in his life, because his preaching of the doctrine of special grace produced a 'parting of the way'. From then on, Rolfe Barnard was censored in the wide fundamentalist circles in which he had been moving. 'Hyper-Calvinism' was the label then fixed upon him, and upon those who believe that election is gratuitous and not a reward for foreseen faith. In vain have many explained to Fundamentalist leaders that there is a difference between Calvinism and hyper-Calvinism. This unfair charge has become simply another part of the reproach of Christ for believers in sovereign grace.

Following the Greenville conference, word went out in fundamentalist circles that Rolfe Barnard had departed from the faith. He was ostra-

cised, like the untouchables of India, by his former friends. Invitations for city-wide crusades stopped. His ministry continued, but mainly in small churches. He became a controversial figure. But he was endowed with a valuable quality which kept him on his course; complete lack of the fear of man. He was one of those rare souls who was willing to stand for the truth, even if alone.

Later Ministry

God crowned his labours with revival blessings in many places in the fifties and sixties, the meetings in Ashland being one example. He preached all over the South, Mid-west, and in Canada, and there are thousands today who can testify that God used him in bringing them to salvation. Quite a number of preachers were converted to a belief in the sovereignty of God.

Many unusual things happened during his evangelistic meetings and anecdotes could easily fill a volume.

Barnard was endowed with a powerful set of lungs and a good voice of medium range. He was an excellent singer and often sang special songs in his evangelistic meetings, accompanied by his wife Hazel. Occasionally he violated all rules of elocution by shrieking at the top of his voice during a sermon. He did this not by an interjection of some kind but during a sentence. For example, he might say, 'The purpose of the cross is the glory of God.' On 'glory' he might say 'glooooo' at the top of his vocal capacity. He did this when his emotions reached a high pitch and he felt very, very strongly about something. Needless to say, such outbursts were ear-splitting and did devastating things to gauges on electronic recording equipment. No one, I suppose, could possibly recommend this as a method, generally speaking, but I can say that this peculiar individualistic trait did have a startling and awakening effect upon an audience. As a rule, it was very difficult for people to sleep when Barnard was preaching.

I heard Barnard preach many times. There were occasions when his sermons were ordinary and unimpressive. But in the right context, he was one of the most powerful preachers I have ever heard. In the midst of an awakening, when the powers of heaven and hell were visibly in conflict, he had a peculiar unction that cannot possibly be described. Like Finney, whose style he followed, and Nettleton whose theology he accepted, he could hold an audience spell-bound in such times.

Rolfe Barnard's gifts were not primarily pastoral. He seemed ill-fitted for a settled type of ministry. He once said, 'Some like to live within the sound of a chapel or church bell. I want to run a rescue station within a yard of hell.'

He was not a builder, he was a trailblazer. He was not a Timothy, charged to take care of the house of God, he was a John the Baptist crying in the wilderness. He emphasised greatly the Lordship of Christ and repentance. One of his few printed messages was entitled, 'John the Baptist Come to Town.' It is a characteristic sermon, and I count it one of my personal treasures.

Although Barnard was often misunderstood, and disliked by many, he was a man, I believe, who had an uncommon love for the souls of men, especially sinners. His messages, many of which are available on tape, demonstrate plainly that he had a fervent desire that lost people submit to the claims of Christ. In some of them, Calvinist though he was, he literally begs them to lay down their arms of rebellion, 'stack arms' he would sometimes say, and receive God's forgiveness through repentance! Out of the pulpit Barnard was, as a rule, withdrawing yet friendly. In relaxed, social circles he had a way of badgering his friends, but in a way that was always taken good-naturedly. I recall one occasion when I became the object of his teasing. In 1963 I, along with several other people, was visiting his home in North Carolina. I had just been married and was making plans to go to the Philippine Islands as a missionary. While at his house I wrote a letter to my new bride. When Barnard discovered it he said, 'John, I understand you want to be a missionary. Before you leave my house I feel I ought to do something to help you. I want to pay for your letter to your wife.' With this remark, he handed me a postage stamp! Thus did Barnard support my missionary deputation! This, of course, brought a round of hearty laughter.

While preaching in Prairieville, Louisiana, he had a heart attack, and died on 21st January, 1969. His funeral was conducted by pastor Henry Mahan in a funeral home in Winston-Salem. I can think of no more fitting climax to this article than the words of pastor Mahan:

> His message of sovereign mercy was an awakening message. It was impossible to remain neutral when Barnard preached. Like the apostle Paul, when Barnard preached, there was either a riot or a revival. As he said so many times, 'When the true gospel of grace is preached, the believers will be glad, the rebels will get mad, and the pharisees will be confused.'
>
> His message was truly the gospel of God's glory. He clearly defined the 'good news' as a work God does for the sinner, not something the sinner does for God. He declared how God can be just and justify the ungodly through the righteousness of Christ Jesus, our Lord.
>
> He has now fully realised the last verse of his favourite song:
>
> *And when life's journey is over,*
> *And I the dear Saviour shall see,*
> *I'll praise Him forever and ever,*
> *For saving a sinner like me.*

Are we on the right track?

With all our advantages why are we failing to produce men of the calibre of Rolfe Barnard? Are we resting in a wrong and complacent way in our beliefs? Is the Calvinism of our day an academic and intellectual one which lacks the qualities of compassion and power?

Are we producing 'TULIP Calvinists' or 'Biblical Calvinists'? We need to remember the origin of TULIP. Arminius reacted against Beza who unlike Calvin, his predecessor, did not hold the doctrines of grace in an harmonious proportion. Orthodox Dutch Christians in turn reacted against Arminius. They produced the formularies of Dordt. These were fine Scriptural statements. Part of the Confession consisted of a refutation of Arminius' five points. The five points countering Arminius came to be known as the five points of Calvinism, even though Calvin had no part in composing them.

The weaknesses and dangers of TULIP

Since Dordt (1620) scores of books have been written based upon the outline known as TULIP. It is here that many have gone off the right track. They have forgotten that a system taken from a controversy in the past has to be studied in that context. It is so easy to go off balance on the one side or the other. This is illustrated by the three columns on page 15. There is no principle inherent in TULIP to ensure or guarantee a sound theology. There is nothing to prevent wrong, even fatal deductions. Moreover, and this is even more serious, essential truths such as human responsibility are omitted in TULIP. J. I. Packer in his excellent little book *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* shows that human responsibility and divine sovereignty must be held together. Human logic must never supplant God's inscrutable wisdom. There is such a thing as 'antinomy', seeming contradiction to human reason, but no contradiction in the mind of God.

I would like to illustrate the imbalance to which TULIP can so easily lead and then point to a better way of expounding the doctrines of grace.

Distorting the Gospel

Recently I listened to a cassette in which an American pastor expounded the third point of TULIP—limited atonement. I looked forward to this because I have never heard a really satisfactory treatment of that subject. Since the speaker trained at Westminster Seminary where high standards of exegesis are inculcated I felt sure that there would be some direct preaching from the texts of Scripture. The experience was a disappointment. The address consisted of deductions and inferences from doctrines already presupposed. Questions followed. My disappointment increased. John Gill was quoted as an invincible authority. Now Gill is fascinating. In his book, 'The Cause of God and Truth', he is like a skilful lawyer. He makes a statement like 2 Peter 2: 1 (even denying the Lord that bought them) to mean the exact opposite of what it plainly and expressly seems to mean. Gill's wretched failure to do justice to passages which demand an unfettered and affectionate proclamation of the Gospel to sinners disqualifies him as far as reliability on this subject is concerned.

Someone in the congregation asked the speaker to comment on Christ weeping over Jerusalem. The reply was astounding! Said he, Christ was weeping over the elect because the text says, 'How oft would I have gathered *thy children.*' That is a quotation of Matthew 23: 37. To make 'the children' of that verse apply to the elect is a distortion. In any case the passage which refers to Christ's tears is Luke 19: 41-44. The lamentation is over those who had missed their time of opportunity. Upon them Christ pronounces a severe sentence—a judgment with tears!

Is it not true that no limitation in the atonement is suggested in the context of preaching the Gospel to all? Particular redemption is a better expression for the truth we have in mind. Wherever par-

The five points of Calvinism are outlined according to the acrostic TULIP. The Arminian tenets are set out on the left and erroneous conclusions on the right.

Arminianism	Calvinism	Hyper-Calvinism
	T **Total Depravity**	
Man has free will and this determines who will, and who will not be saved.	Man has fallen in all his faculties including his will.	Man is dead in sin and therefore is not responsible for saving faith or repentance.
	U **Unconditional Election**	
God chose those who he knew would exercise faith in Christ.	Salvation is according to God's sovereign choice which is not disposed by works or faith foreseen.	Because God has chosen some it is inconsistent to offer salvation to all.
	L **Limited Atonement**	
Christ died equally for all.	The atonement of Christ secures the salvation of the elect alone.	God deals lovingly with the elect and only wrathfully with the non-elect for whom there are no benefits from the atonement and no common grace.
	I **Irresistible Grace**	
God gives everyone an equal opportunity. The new birth takes place after man's decision.	The Holy Spirit regenerates the elect through the means of grace, principally preaching.	The Holy Spirit regenerates the elect without prior preparation.
	P **Perseverance of the Saints**	
Believers can fall away and be lost.	Through faith the elect persevere to salvation.	The moral law is not the rule of life for believers.

ticular redemption is suggested (e.g. Heb. 10: 14) it is for the strengthening and comfort of God's people.

Exposition of Scripture the best way

In contrast to TULIP the Scriptures form the best base from which to expound the doctrines of grace. Everywhere in Scripture there is an inbuilt safeguard which guarantees proportion, balance and practical application.

Take Romans as an example. That epistle begins with an exposition of total depravity which is the best place to begin if we are going to appreciate the nature of God's sovereign grace. Paul shows the inability of man to save himself, 'There is none that seeketh after God' (Rom. 3: 11). But by the same third chapter the apostle has also expounded the doctrine of common grace which essentially precedes and is preparatory to saving grace (Rom. 1: 19-2: 16).

Common grace was revealed directly after the fall inasmuch as God did not

cast off the fallen race of men as he did with the fallen race of angels. Mankind was put on probation. Common grace includes the restraint of evil, the bestowal of good, the provision of civil government, the preservation of the world until the day of judgment (Gen. 9: 27) and countless blessings (Acts 14: 17).

Common grace is a truth of the utmost importance as it enables us to understand God's ways with the world (Rom. 2: 4) and his attitude toward sinners, as Prof. Murray declares in his essay on common grace, 'it would be desperate exegetical violence that would attempt to separate the good gifts bestowed from the disposition of kindness and mercy in the mind of God' (*Collected Writings*, Vol. 2, p. 106).

A right understanding of God's attitude revealed in such Scriptures as Genesis 6: 6, Deuteronomy 5: 29, Psalm 145 and Ezekiel chapters 3, 18 and 33 is essential if we are to be rightly motivated in proclaiming the Gospel.

TULIP says nothing about common grace. That truth logically follows the subject of the fall and hence is prominent in the early chapters of Genesis. A better order of subject matter than that suggested by TULIP is TCUIPP. (In another language a word might be made of it.) Total depravity, common grace, unconditional election, irresistible grace, perseverence of the saints and particular redemption.

If we must have five points then why not the five points of Romans 8: 28ff. This section is known as the golden chain and it makes TULIP to be like brass by comparison. Set within the mighty context of the Romans epistle we find all these points refer to God the Father. We begin with his love in eternity past and end with a blaze of glory in the eternity to come. Predestination is beautifully portrayed. The passage concludes with a stirring and triumphant application. The theme continues in the next three chapters: the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation (ch. 9), the necessity of the use of means, that is Gospel preaching (ch. 10), and the triumph of God's purpose in history, both for Israel and the Gentile nations (ch. 11).

Other parts of Scripture present the doctrines of sovereign grace but always in a way which ensures a practical application. For instance these truths are presented in Ephesians chapter one as God's greatest blessings to us. But Paul goes on to show that an appreciation of God's grace is something which we enjoy corporately in worship. Ephesians 4: 1-6 is an example of a practical application of sovereign grace. If we truly love this teaching then that is how we will behave!

Likewise when our Lord spoke of sovereign grace at length in such passages as John chapters 6, 10 or 17, or briefly as in Luke 10: 21, 22 there was always proportion.

God's way of spiritual sculpture is to employ the Scriptures. This ensures balance, proportion, beauty and harmony. Some contemporary sculptors portray the ways in which modern mankind has gone astray by hewing out figures of monstrous proportions. If we are to avoid spiritual monstrosities we had better keep to Scripture. And if we use systems like TULIP then let us take care that we do not go off the track.

Correspondence

The Carey Conference
York 1979

From Roger Ryan

I was interested to read in issue 43 about the subject for the next conference—'The church and the working class.' This is an excellent proposition. Before coming to L.B.C. I spent 13 years in unskilled employment. My last job was a three year period on the production line in a Leeds shoe factory. It has been very sad to observe two factors.

The first is the inability, even unwilling-

ness of the local church (any denomination) to attempt to understand the uneducated mind and the modern media in order to communicate the Gospel. There is something radically wrong with the situation where the church building is situated among the homes of unchurched factory workers and an immigrant community, but the Sunday congregation travel in by train from suburban districts. The local community feels that what happens within 'that' building is not for them but for the managers and those who wield the secular power in the wider community.

The second factor concerns the people themselves: largely they are not well educated—and who needs to be to paint a door or make shoes, read *The Daily Mirror* or watch Crossroads. They are apathetic and indifferent not only toward the church but also local politics and their own trade unions. They will watch a colourful street scene even if it is foolish but not listen to Reformed sermons, they will read *The Sun* but not the Puritans, they will go to Bingo but not to church. They will revel in football chants or drinks all round for the lads but laugh at the songs of Zion.

I have spent much time thinking through these problems in the light of my own shop floor experience. Even though I have theories and ideas I am not sure where the answers are to be found. It is sad that the churches are so slow to discard old traditions and change old ways of thinking, and so slow to reach out and win the people. So often the local community is shrugged off as a 'hard area'.

I look forward to the conference at York as a positive and encouraging event. It is hoped that the papers on this subject will come from those who are pastors in working class areas who have grappled with the problems. I have heard and read too many middle-class philanthropists and 'experts' from university posts with their latest text book theories. The scandal is that the only time such people have been in the actual situation was when they made a visit to conduct a survey for their latest thesis. We need realistic and perceptive papers by men who have come to know and sympathise with such experiences as lack of job satisfaction, redundancy, unemployment and depressed social services. The different aspects of trade-unionism are important too—the apathetic and the militant.

My biggest problem in a factory was failure to give to a consistent witness in a hostile environment. Often my witness was negative—the films I did not see, the cigarettes I did not smoke. I think that Reformed churches could examine modern methods of communication, colourful literature and also drama since the working man spends over 15 years of his life watching television.

Dear Roger,

Your letter will help focus our attention on an important subject. I don't think we should be too hard on the academics. Some of them may write out of genuine concern and any information which is factual or thought-provoking deserves attention. At least they are using their brains which many fail to do.

Some will be disturbed by your reference to drama as they condemn all acting out of hand. I have waded through their arguments from history and from Scripture but found them unconvincing. That anyone should act the rôle of our Lord they think to be blasphemy of the most horrible proportions. What they seem to overlook is that nobody imagines for one moment that the actor is the Lord. More blasphemous to me are those who stand in the pulpit and intone the words of our Lord in a morbid and loathsomely boring manner which manner we could never conceive that he used. The professional actors often put a great deal more thought into what they are saying than most of our preachers do when they read the Scriptures in a slovenly and expressionless manner. What drama I have seen (the efforts at the National Evangelical Anglican Conference at Nottingham) was either mediocre or weak in the truly amateur sense. I do not see any danger of drama supplanting preaching because truly worthy preaching will always outclass and outshine all other substitutes or rivals. We need not be over anxious to condemn sincere efforts but rather judge every attempt to present the Gospel on its own merits. Yours etc. E.H.

Did Christ Come to Save the Whole World?

An exposition by the editor on John 12: 47, 'I came not to judge the world but to save the world.'

THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THESE WORDS OF OUR LORD WERE SPOKEN IS VERY IMportant. They were addressed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the same people over whom Christ wept. Says Calvin, 'Why then did Christ not wish to condemn them? Because he had temporarily laid aside the office of judge and offers to all indiscriminately and stretches out his arms to embrace all, that all may be encouraged to repent. And yet he heightens by an important detail the crime of rejecting an invitation so kind and generous; for it is as if he had said: "See, I have come to call all; and forgetting the role of judge, my one aim is to attract and rescue from destruction those who already seem doubly ruined." '

What was Christ's declared purpose at this point? The answer, 'to save the world.' Since he is addressing those who were rejectors, even the reprobate of Jerusalem, we must say that his purpose is to save the whole world in the universal sense. Every single creature without exception is invited to come and every single creature without exception is assured by Christ himself that the express purpose of his mission is not to judge the world, 'For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved' (John 3: 17).

Some years ago a well known preacher came to embrace the doctrines of grace. He began however to fall into the trap of exalting the sovereignty of God at the expense of human responsibility. It is possible to think that since God elects some to salvation and bypasses the rest that therefore God is responsible for the fact that sinners perish rather than the sinners themselves being responsible. The Holy Spirit intervened on behalf of this particular preacher as he has retrieved many others from what can become a hideous misconstruction. The Spirit did it in this instance by pressing the preacher against his natural inclination to preach on John 3: 16. When he could no longer resist this conviction he began to read John Calvin's commentary on that text. Why not consult the master himself, he thought, and see whether he expounded this, the best known verse, in his usual Biblical fashion? This is how Calvin puts it:

> *That whosoever believeth on him should not perish.* The outstanding thing about faith is that it delivers us from eternal destruction. For he especially wanted to say that although we seem to have been born for death sure deliverance is offered to us by the faith of Christ so that we must not fear the death which otherwise threatens us. And he has used a general term, both to invite indiscriminately all to share in life and to cut off every excuse from unbelievers. Such is also the significance of the term 'world' which he had used before. For although there is nothing in the world deserving of God's favour, he nevertheless shows he is favourable to the whole world when he calls all without exception to the faith of Christ, which is indeed an entry into life.

To complete the story it must be said that our preacher friend was wonderfully

delivered from the imbalance which had begun to beset him. He found a new liberty and freedom in preaching the Gospel. Not a few students have discovered that Calvin is astonishingly consistent in his exegesis of passages on the subject of salvation. Where there is universality he stresses it; where election he does not compromise.

Now when we get down to John 12: 47, *I came not to judge the world but to save the world*, we observe a positive and a negative assertion as follows:

1. What Christ did not come to do—*to judge the world*
2. What Christ did come to do—*to save the world.*

1. What Christ did not come to do

'*I came not to judge the world.*'

When he declares that he did not come to judge the world we need to understand what he means by world and what by judge.

What is meant by world?

Some take the world to mean the world of the Gentiles in contrast to the Jewish nation only. That is legitimate but 'world' is used in many different ways. 'He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not' (John 1: 10). John says that we should not love the world (1 John 2: 15) and goes on to explain that he means by that, the worldly anti-God spirit of the world. John also declares that Christ is the propitiation not only for our sins but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2: 2). Now if the word world meant every single creature the Holy Spirit doubtless would have caused that to be written. Likewise if particularity was important the Holy Spirit could easily have caused John to write that Christ's sacrifice was the propitiation for the elect only, but he says the whole world.

Read at its face value 1 John 2: 1, 2 is an assurance to any man that there is an advocate who has made propitiation for the sins of the whole world. If a man requires such an advocate no obstacle whatsoever lies in the way. Let him be encouraged to find in Christ an advocate indeed and know at the same time that the propitiation of Christ will count for believers only.

Likewise when we examine John 3: 16 'For God so loved the world,' it would be an easy matter for the Holy Spirit to direct that it should read, 'For God so loved the church,' or 'For God so loved every single creature.' But no! It is simply a general term 'world'. As such it must be left. Some try to restrict world to believers asserting that the context speaks of those believing. But it does not say that 'God so loved believers that he gave.' It says 'the world' and what is general must be left general. In any case both in the case of John 3: 16 and John 12: 47 the Greek is in the present continuous tense—*every one believing in me.* The question is an open one. It is a matter of trial now. Do you, or do you not believe? God could have judged the world and destroyed it long ago.

He has not. Instead he has shown his love. Now the question is one of responsibility. Do you believe?

Particular redemption, or the fact that Christ died to infallibly secure the salvation of those whom the Father had given him, is a very important doctrine,

the value and usefulness of which can be determined by each context in which it appears. For instance in Ephesians 5: 25, it is used to encourage grateful love in the redeemed. In Acts 20: 28 this truth is used to encourage elders to feed Christ's people, and in Hebrews 10: 14 the marvellous efficacy of a particular atonement is stressed and held forth for admiration. Particular redemption can be used in an evangelistic context (as it is in John 6: 37) to declare the invincible purpose of God, thus warning enemies of the futility of trying to oppose the kingdom of God. But even in that case our Lord ensures that no-one will be discouraged by a wrong conclusion. Should anyone be thinking of coming to him he adds 'and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'

What is meant by judge?

Matthew chapter 25 provides the most comprehensive account of the last day of judgement when Christ will pronounce the final sentence whether it be eternal life or everlasting punishment. The day is coming when he will be revealed to judge the quick and the dead. That will be the purpose of his second coming. To judge, in the sense of pronouncing final sentence, was not the purpose of Christ's mission to this world.

If you are an unbeliever or one who pretends to be a Christian but you have never truly repented I want to say to you that every day that passes without your turning to Christ for salvation is a precious opportunity lost. Noah built an ark by which a world was saved. Every day he builded and every day he preached, opportunity was afforded for unbelievers to go to Noah and say, 'Noah you are right, I want to join you in that ark when the flood comes and I want to prove my sincerety by helping you build it now.' When the flood came how filled with remorse were they who had neglected salvation! Will you too neglect salvation, the great salvation of Christ?

Jesus did not come to judge. He will not condemn now. He has postponed the judgement and given time for repentance. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance! (2 Peter 3: 9, N.I.V.). John Owen seeks to confine the above text to the elect which may be the reason why he has been called a high Calvinist, going higher than Calvin who declares on 2 Peter 3: 9 'This is his wondrous love towards the human race, that he desires all men to be saved, and is prepared to bring even the perishing to safety.' We must notice the order, that God is prepared to receive all men into repentance, so that none may perish. These words indicate the means of obtaining salvation, and whoever of us seeks salvation must learn to follow in this way. It could be asked here, if God does not want any to perish, why do so many in fact perish? My reply is that no mention is made here of the secret decree of God by which the wicked are doomed to their own ruin, but only of his loving-kindness as it is made known to us in the Gospel. There God stretches out his hand to all alike, but he only grasps those (in such a way as to lead to himself) whom he has chosen before the foundation of the world!

John Owen's work on particular redemption (Vol. 13) is good but in his zeal to defeat the Arminians he falls into the same error as John Gill. Though certainly not of the same school as Gill, occasionally he was pushed to assert for a text something else than what it plainly states. It is surely a bad sign when we have to qualify Scriptures and say that they do not mean what they say. To

try and restrict 2 Peter 3: 9 using the 'us-ward' to confine the passage to the elect breaks down when we come to, 'but that all should come to repentance.' Not the elect only but all are commanded to repent (Acts 17: 30). If God did not desire the repentance of all why should he command it?

That we understand the full responsibility of every creature and the sincere desire of God toward every creature is most important. Our attitude in these matters has a tremendous influence on our outlook toward sinners. The implications for evangelism are major not minor. If we do not believe that God desires the salvation of all men then why should we desire their salvation? If God is not sincere in the free offers of the Gospel then why should we be sincere? But no sinner can say that God is insincere or does not desire his salvation. This fact of God's sincerity seen in the compassion of Jesus Christ is as lucid as it is compelling. Man's own sinful nature and obstinacy apart, there is no obstacle whatever impeding a sinner from calling on God for salvation. The prayer for salvation is very plain, 'Lord, I am a helpless, depraved, bond-slave of iniquity, lost, guilty and undone. Be propitiated to me and give me all that is needed for my salvation. Lord be all of Isaiah 63: 1-3 to me.' Will he not do it?

Does God desire the salvation of all the lost; that is every one of them? 1 Timothy 2: 4 and Ezekiel 33: 11 declare as much and our Lord's ministry confirms the same. John Calvin on John 12: 48 interprets Christ's meaning as follows: 'Because I burn with a great desire for your salvation, I refrain from my right of condemning you.' Who would not interpret Christ's tears over reprobate Jerusalem as desire for anything other than their salvation? Does he not lament the fact that they had missed the great day of their visitation? The day of opportunity was over. Salvation was now hid from their eyes. The judicial blindness from God was upon them. Their stubbornness had led to God himself hardening their hearts and blinding their eyes (John 12: 40).

Our time on earth is a day of probation and hence of opportunity. The time allotted to mankind is called 'the last days'. Until the coming to judgement of Jesus Christ this is a time of proclamation of the Gospel to every creature, *not* that we do *not* want them all to be saved, but that we do pray for and desire them *all* to be saved. We do not go out and proclaim that God does *not* want men to be saved. Rather we confront all unregenerate creatures with the object of salvation in mind. This is the time of the salvation of the world. The condemnation is coming when Christ will judge the world. Until then it is a time of universal proclamation of the Gospel and universal preaching, a time, in fact, of heightened responsibility for all hearers. And so great is the personal responsibility involved in rejecting what constitutes wholehearted invitations and offers of mercy, that the judgement will be very severe and terrible for those who reject them, just as it was for the Christ-rejectors of Jerusalem. If these invitations were insincere they would be hypocritical and sinful but God cannot sin. He cannot be accused of duplicity. The judgement was worse for the Christ-rejectors of Jerusalem because they received the offers of mercy from the very lips of the God-man himself. The Gospel heightens human responsibility immensely. Christ will return with flaming fire on those who *obey not* the Gospel (2 Thess. 1: 8).

Again let me plead with those whose hearts are hard. There are some who know a lot about Christian teaching and who have heard many sermons and

who are yet unconverted. I know some hyper-Calvinists who show no real sign of the new heart or of regeneration. They have hearts of stone still! Yes, I know of some who would even use the doctrine of God's sovereignty as an excuse not to come to Christ for salvation. I urge you to see that when Jesus looks toward you and sets his eyes upon you and stretches forth his hands toward you in earnest invitation, that he really means that you should come now. It is your greatest madness to turn away and it will be your greatest pain in hell if you do turn away, when you know that salvation visited you and yet you refused it.

2. **What Christ did come to do**

'I came to save the world.'

We have already understood the world to mean the world in the general sense. It only remains for us to see what is meant by saving the world and understand the love behind that purpose. We will then conclude by answering objections.

What is meant by save

When our Lord came into the world we read that he came to his own and that his own received him not. Knowing the end from the beginning and being the Alpha and Omega of all things our Lord did not reason that it was pointless in coming to his own if they would not receive him. No, he came to them nevertheless and he came with the express purpose of saving them. His foreknowledge or omniscience did not deter him. He said of his own people, 'how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chicks under her wings, but ye would not' (Matt. 23: 37). That he was speaking of reprobate Jerusalem is unmistakable for the whole of Matthew 23 consists of woes pronounced upon Jerusalem and her scribes and Pharisees.

In declaring his objective to save the world (John 12: 47) he is indicating as he was in his conversation with Nicodemus that the cross must be lifted up before all nations. As the brazen serpent was lifted up before the eyes of dying, rebellious, lost Israelites to behold, so now the cross must be lifted up that all men might be drawn to Christ. The world of Psalm 24 is meant—the world, and all they that dwell therein (Psalm 24: 1). Hence in giving the great commission our Lord is very specific in using universal terms.

The intention or purpose with regard to all proclamation and teaching is the conversion of all nations, all creatures, and all people, in general, and in particular, none excepted. Our aim is the salvation of the world! Christ came to save the world! That was the object of his mission and that is the object of our mission to all nations. That we are fully aware that the sovereign purpose of God is to call out a people for himself does not change the object and the command to go into all the world to preach the good news. We may not stop half way and say we have called to many and a chosen few have been saved. As a result we can now drop our objective and settle down to a cosy time with the few.

Christ's love for a lost world

We are obligated by God's moral law or ten commandments to love our neighbour as ourselves. To love them truly is to desire for them their best and highest good, that is we wish them to be saved. Paul longed for the salvation of his kinsmen the Jews and his expressions of desire in Romans 9: 1-3 and 10: 1

are intense. Would Christ in his perfect fulfilment of the moral law show a love less than that of his apostle?

Christ's love and compassion was revealed in his unremitting labours, healing and teaching, preaching and organising preaching tours (Luke 10: 1ff.). Well is his ministry summed up in Romans 10: 21, 'But to Israel he saith, All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.' A division of that text suggests itself as follows:

How did Christ preach? *He stretched forth his hands in invitation*
When did Christ so preach? *All the day long*
To whom did Christ so preach? *To a disobedient and gainsaying people.*

Christ loved sinners perfectly in his humanity as he fulfilled the moral law. Did this love not conflict with his divinity because we read in the Psalms that God hates all the workers of iniquity? Since all are sinners must he not hate all without exception (Ps. 5: 5)?

There is no conflict here for Christ loves sinners as the Father loves them. He loves them with a love of goodness, giving rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14: 17). It is a love of benevolence. It is a love that manifests itself in forbearance. It is a love of patience and a love of longsuffering. Inasmuch as his love which is aimed to bring them to repentance (Rom. 2: 4) is abused, he restrains his wrath. This wrath nevertheless is treasured up until the day of wrath and the revelation of his righteous anger.

But how can love and hatred be mixed together? The answer is that if we simpletons experience righteous anger and compassionate love at the same time, how much more shall God whose ways and thoughts are infinitely above ours, have in his nature different attributes at the same time (Is. 55: 8, 9)? Shall not his attributes of justice, love, patience, wisdom, longsuffering run concurrently. Must we be so perverse as to think that God can only feel one thought at a time?

Is this hard to understand? It is not. You who are impenitent when you sin and wallow in it I want you to know that God hates you with a perfect detestation and abhorrence—not just your sin, but you! You are the cause and mover in your own miry sin. That God does not immediately cast you into a fiery hell of torment is amazing. Why does he not do it? Well he who hates evil also loves and he has restrained his wrath because of his love. Here you are still benefiting from one thousand evidences of his love. Do not mistake the meaning of it. The hatred, the wrath and the vengeance are there for perfect love has a perfect counterpart by way of detesting the source of evil. I beg you to forsake your evil life now.

We are not to make God's secret will the basis of our motivation or action here on earth. John Owen states this well when he declares (in the same work formerly adverted to):

> We must exactly distinguish between man's duty and God's purpose, there being no connection between them. The purpose and decree of God is not the rule of our duty; neither is the performance of our duty in doing what we are commanded any declaration of what is God's purpose to do, or his decree that it should be done. Especially is this to be seen and considered in the duty of the ministers of the Gospel, in the dispensing of the Word, in exhortations, invitations, precepts and threatenings, committed unto them;

> all of which are perpetual declaratives of our duty, and do manifest the approbation of the thing exhorted and invited to, with the truth of the connection between one thing and another, but not of the counsel and purpose of God, in respect of individual persons, in the ministry of the Word. A minister is not to make inquiry after, nor to trouble himself about, those secrets of the eternal mind of God, namely—whom he purposeth to save, and whom he hath sent Christ to die for in particular. It is enough for them to search his revealed will, and thence take their directions from it from whence they have their commission.

Jesus knew from the beginning that Judas would be a traitor. Yet he did not make that the basis of his appointment of Judas. He set us an example of following God's revealed will in all things. Judas possessed the necessary gifts and qualifications and as we weave the Scriptures together we see Judas was Jesus' own familiar friend, a trusted one (Ps. 41: 9) an equal with the other apostles (Ps. 55: 12-14). He was the treasurer of the party entrusted with high office. It was all this that caused Jesus deep pain and sorrow (John 13: 21) and the small band of intimate friends to be exceedingly sorrowful (Matt. 26: 22). To be noted is the fact that by every form of persuasion both by warning and pledge of friendship was Judas given opportunity to turn back from his horrible course. Had our Lord conducted his life upon foreknowledge he would surely have felt little about Judas, saying to himself 'Well I have known all along that this would happen.' On the contrary no such fatalistic attitude is seen. Likewise with the ten lepers he did not say 'Well I know only one will be grateful so I will heal him alone.' Not what will be but what is now was the basis of our Lord's life, and must be the basis of ours. Where would we be if we adopted the attitude, 'Well we know pagans will not and cannot believe so we are not going to bother with them!' No! Our objective to the end of time must and will always be the salvation of every creature.

Objections answered

Christ's love for the whole world conflicts with his love for his own elect people. Does not he say, 'I pray not for the world' (John 17: 9)?

We are to follow Christ's example of praying in particular and in detail for his own people, especially those who like the apostles before them are exposed to extreme danger in the world.

God through Christ stretches forth his hands to all the world, which thing he would not do if he did not love the world in spite of its sin. We are to stretch forth our hands in love and as sent ambassadors beseech sinners to be reconciled to God.

Since God is essentially love by nature and gracious by disposition why should he not proffer to a fallen world what he did not proffer to fallen angels, namely, mercy through a Christ? And if the whole depraved world reject such overtures of love is it wrong that God should stretch forth his hands still further and by irresistible grace draw to himself a people upon whom he has set his electing love from eternity? Why should there be any conflict between a love that goes forth into the world and having gone goes still further to inwardly constrain some? Is not this the point of the parable of the wedding supper (Luke 14: 16-24)? When all had made feeble excuses the Lord still filled his house with guests!

Surely Christ if he came to save the whole world is frustrated because it is obvious he has failed hopelessly in that objective.

Our Lord expressed frustration and sorrow on many occasions. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. What the prophets Habakkuk, Isaiah and Jeremiah experienced by his Spirit before him and his apostles after him, Christ too experienced. What pastors experience today in many disappointments and setbacks, he too, even now, experiences, for he is one with his people in all their trials and frustrations. When Paul in Jerusalem was desperate, being rejected on every side, the Lord stood by him, and said, 'Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome' (Acts 23: 11).

It is true on the face of it that our Lord's ministry seemed to have very little fruit by way of numbers. Also he was rejected by his own nation and that surely was grievous, frustrating and very painful.

But I will tell you plainly why God is not frustrated in permitting these frustrations. The answer is that he is overruling it all for good—just as he overruled the greatest defeat of all, namely Christ's ignominious death. Was not that for our good and for our salvation? Yet at the time that cross was the most terrible defeat ever experienced by the disciples.

The rejection of Jesus by the Jews was overruled for good inasmuch as the Gospel then ran to the Gentile nations. Moreover as B. B. Warfield shows in his unusual exposition of John 3: 16 we are wise to refrain from talking about defeat and frustration until we see the final outcome, which is yet to be. The full extent of salvation in the earth has yet to be seen (Hab. 2: 14).

We must remember that the sincere mission of Christ through us his people to every creature without exception leaves all those who refuse his Gospel without excuse. Did he not go to them they would have no sin (that is the particular sin of refusing the remedy) but now they have no cloak for their sin. The more sincere, real and hearty our outreach to all, the more fruit we are likely to see (2 Cor. 9: 6, John 16: 6-11) and the greater the condemnation of the rejectors (1 Cor. 2: 16).

Now there are frustrations and many tears (Ps. 126: 5, 6) which patiently we must bear with, as Christ did before us. In that last day there will be no frustration, only glory, the glory of God's justice in the condemnation of the rejectors and the glory of his grace in those rejectors that he chose to save in spite of themselves.

I do not want to conclude on the defensive but rather close by saying that the love of God for the world of men is a great motive in evangelism. The election of the Father is a stimulus to outreach because we know he will give a people to his Son. The glory of Christ is a spur because we know his name and his cause must have the victory. The Holy Spirit himself is a mighty incentive for he will convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgement. The command of our Lord Jesus Christ to preach to every creature spurs us on because our responsibility is very plain and we must obey. But we are not sent to a world unloved. We are sent to love and labour in a world which God loves. We are to love our neighbours as ourselves and as we love them, we know that God loves them. In this way we shall be the more motivated to preach the Gospel that the world might be saved.

There are books which every Christian should have. A beginning has to be made somewhere. The new convert needs to be gradually introduced to the most relevant books. Not only will these first books be a formulative influence but the young Christian knowing their content may be enthusiastic to recommend some of them to others.

The Young Christian's paperback library

The first subject to be clear about is conversion. John Blanchard's *Right with God* (Banner, 60p) spells that out very well and Walter Chantry's *Today's Gospel Authentic or Synthetic* (Banner, 60p) illustrates most clearly the difference between superficial and false conversion on the one hand and true conversion on the other. Taking conversion to be a reality, what about building up a library?

1 Now that I am a Christian E. F. Kevan E.P. £1.30

Some of the implications and responsibilities of being a Christian are outlined. The author does not go into detail about the very first responsibility of a new convert which is to face up to the command of Christ to be baptised. Baptism means not only union with Christ but union with his Church which brings us face to face with the responsibility of church membership. The booklet *Baptism and Church Membership* by Erroll Hulse, Carey, 30 pence, expounds these matters from Scripture and applies them.

2 Go Free Robert Horn I.V.P. £1.05

Justification is to our experience of Christianity as wings are to a bird or foundations to a house. This 128 pager states the subject in as plain and clear and as contemporary a fashion as possible.

3 The 1689 Confession of Faith Carey 60p

Many reasons could be given to substantiate the claim that the Westminster Confession of Faith is the best ever produced. The 1689 Confession follows the Westminster Confession about 90 percent of the way and then with the remainder makes some excellent progress. The improvements have been fully justified by the subsequent course of history. This Confession published by Carey is in modern language. When Spurgeon began his ministry in London he republished the 1689 Baptist Confession. How sensible, for we ought to know what we believe and this has never been more concisely and comprehensively stated than here.

4 A Body of Divinity Thomas Watson Banner £2.10

The same Westminster Assembly referred to above produced two catechisms. Thomas Watson wrote a commentary on the shorter of the two. Now a commentary by a Puritan on an old catechism does not sound as though it will set the world on fire. Spurgeon detected the value of this work and when you read what he has to say about it and about its author you will see that even he cannot find enough words suitable to commend so helpful a volume. He edited these writings and published them in one volume. The Banner of Truth has presented the work in three attractive books, (1) *The Body of Divinity*, (2) *The Lord's Prayer*, and (3) *The Ten Commandments*. These treasures

are far too valuable to appear in paperback and far too good for you to be without. For theological and devotional value I would put Watson well before modern writers like Berkhof. Watson is helpful in expounding *The Lord's Prayer.*
John Whites' book *People in Prayer,* I.V.P., £1.10 is commended. We can learn more by observing the example of others than by studying techniques. The prayers of Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Daniel, Hannah, Job, Paul and Jesus are expounded.

5 Profiting from the Word A. W. Pink Banner 60p

Biographers are discovering that Mr. Pink was somewhat eccentric. That does not nullify his gift as a writer. He used his gift well. Mr. Pink shows in a very practical way how to profit from the Word with regard to a knowledge of sin, of God, and Christ, with regard to prayer, good works, obedience, one's attitude to the world, the promises, joy and love.

6 Mystery of Providence John Flavel Banner 60p

It would be interesting to count up the proportion of books here recommended which come as a heritage from the Puritan age. That was the golden age when theology not only reached its apex in clarity of expression but also in depth of experience. To understand that God is ordering all affairs and how to interpret his ways day by day is a priority.

7 The Sovereignty of God A. W. Pink Banner 60p

That the young Christian should come to acknowledge and live by the great truths of the sovereignty of God is important. The whole of one's thinking and practice is affected by this area of truth and if God's sovereignty is neglected an entirely erroneous way of thinking about salvation and about evangelism is the sad result. That a right balance be held between God's sovereignty and little man's responsibility is of the utmost importance.
J. I. Packer's little book *The Sovereignty of God and Evangelism* (Hodder), should be read with the above.

8 The Pilgrim's Progress John Bunyan Lutterworth £1.10
or deluxe edition by Banner of Truth at £4.00

For its power to edify, inspire and comfort the Christian in his experience this book has outstripped all others, the Bible excepted. One of the many values of this volume is the portrayal of the difficulties that soon confront the Christian who sets his vision on attaining the kingdom of heaven. It is extremely helpful for pastors to direct attention to such things as the slough of despond and also to use the book as a warning about various characters who inevitably appear on the scene to distract and confuse the Christian pilgrimage. Along similar lines is Bunyan's *The Holy War.* A version in modern English which is highly commended is published by Evangelical Press at £2.50 (paperback £1.50).

9 The Book that Speaks for Itself Robert Horn I.V.P. £1.05

Through the mass media, in schools and universities and in literature generally the Word of God is attacked, maligned, misrepresented and regarded as a volume of mythology and stories for children. With such opposition it is necessary for the young believer to be equipped concerning the authority of Scripture and to be aware of the nature of the conflict surrounding its inspiration and infallibility. Bob Horn's book is ideal. Larger books can be added later, such as E. J. Young's *Thy Word is Truth.* A volume recently published is by Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible.*

10 Spiritual Depression—Its causes and cure
Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones P. & I. £1.10

The false notion that Christianity is all joy and easy going is wide spread. This is far from the case. Many who set off on the way do find themselves oppressed by spiritual opposition and the powers of darkness. To know what is happening is of great value and to realise that spiritual depression is something widespread is also helpful. To know that there are cures is of even more assistance especially when explained by one so able.

11 A help to the Study of the Holy Spirit W. E. Biederwolf Baker £1.15

No volume packs as much clear exposition as this one. If you see Edwin Palmer's book on the subject secondhand, get it. Of the larger volumes Smeaton is particularly helpful.

12 Whose World A. N. Triton I.V.P. £1.30

Deals practically with the subjects of politics, culture, education, technology, marriage and money. Concerning practical living in our modern industrial society, Sir Fred Catherwood, writes with lucidity in a book with that title. *Reformation for the family*, Carey, 90p, expounds that subject and many other practical matters.

13 The God Who is There Francis Schaeffer Hodder & Stoughton 95p

This is the best volume written by Francis Schaeffer and is unique inasmuch as it gives a complete picture of where we have arrived with our culture today in art, music, philosophy and theology. To explain these things in a language understood by laymen is a most laudable achievement. Nevertheless even though the author sets out to accomplish this it is still a book for intellectuals. Although specialised in this way, the volume is so unusual that it is included.

14 The Marks of the Cults David Breese Scripture Press £1.05

Care must be taken not to get bogged down with details put out by the cults. This book surveys the main principles.

15 The Chaos of the Cults J. K. van Baalen P. & I. £2.50

The Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons are most frequently encountered but there are a number of other cults that the Christian comes across. It is important therefore that he be able to refer to the origin and teachings of these false cults.

16 The Great Brain Robbery David C. C. Watson Walter 85p

A fascinating and helpful introduction to creation and evolution. When scientific matters are discussed we must remember that all scientists can be wrong. Researchers who are Bible-believing can be wrong but especially are evolutionists in error to make their sweeping claims. *From Nothing to Nature*, Professor E. H. Andrews, E.P., £2.50 is a young people's guide to creation and evolution.

17 The Story of the Church Renwick I.V.P. £1.30

A perspective view of God's work in building the Church through the centuries is important for every believer. In a small compass Renwick provides us with an introduction to the most important developments in Church history.

18 The History of Christianity Lion £7.50

In popular style this book is comprehensive and very informative and magnificently produced with lots of colourful illustrations. Nominal Christianity is included as though it was the real thing. Providing it is borne in mind that this book is non-definitive and very broad in its sweep it is very useful.

19 Dawn or Twilight Herbert Carson I.V.P. £1.35

The Roman Catholic Church occupies a major role in history and we ought to know whether that church is reviving today or whether it is apostate. Herbert Carson brings us right up to date in expanding on these matters. Obviously the subject is more relevant in Roman Catholic areas, but you may have Roman Catholic friends in which case it is important to be well informed. This is more a book for reference than for exciting reading.

20 The Genius of Puritanism Peter Lewis Carey £1.50

With a revival of interest in the Reformers and Puritans many will want to know who the Puritans were. Peter Lewis does just that and also introduces us to the Puritan age. He expounds chief matters in which the Puritans shone. In addition to this, the volume is most valuable for counselling troubled souls. Never was there a better or richer period for the exposition of Scripture than the Puritan era. Maximum benefit can therefore be gleaned from that time. While many Puritan books have been published this is the only one which really explains why so many are keen on the Puritan expositions.

21 The Puritan Hope Iain Murray Banner £1.50

Very much a complementary volume to the former, Mr. Murray describes the spiritual revival that lay behind the Puritan movement in the Cambridge area. But the main theme of the book is to explain the subject of the last things—that is what we can expect in the future. Many grotesque and distorted systems have developed concerning what should be believed about what lies ahead. It is therefore good for the young believer to know something about the background of these matters and what our forefathers believed concerning the future.

22 An Introduction to the Baptists Erroll Hulse Carey £1.20 illustrated

A further aspect of Church history is the development of the Baptists. Since we are of that persuasion we want to know about our origins, our distinctive beliefs, our strengths and weaknesses. Many Baptists have little or no idea of the difference between Strict Baptists and General Baptists. Then there are those who would avoid both those descriptions. There is no alternative really but to do one's homework. After presenting the historical side and outlining developments in various countries the author makes an appraisal of the contemporary situation.

23 Here I Stand R. Bainton Mentmore Books (New Americal Library) 80p

This volume is chosen because of the central and crucial role played by Luther under the grace and empowering of God. He was used to change the history of Europe and hence of the world.

24 God's Outlaw—The Story of William Tyndale Brian Edwards E.P. £1.80

While Luther was the Reformation herald in Germany, Tyndale was the counterpart as far as the Bible was concerned for England. It is good to develop an appetite for biographies but important to remember that they should be accurate and well researched, as this one is.

25 Calvin E. Stickleberger James Clarke £3.00

Disparaging words have been spoken about John Calvin but in fact he was a great missionary mind and first rate preacher of the Gospel. Calvin was the theologian of the Reformation and the sooner young believers are acquainted with the facts, the better instructed they will be in a time when little impetus remains from the great advance and good work achieved by the sixteenth century Reformation.

26 Other Biographies

Helpful larger biographies are two volumes of autobiographical material by C. H. Spurgeon published by The Banner of Truth. Also a priority is the Life of George Whitefield by Arnold Dallimore. Published by the Banner this covers the first part of his life. Spurgeon and Whitefield are ranked as the greatest preachers in the history of England. George Pollock has produced popular biographies of both Spurgeon and Whitefield published by Hodder. I am not sure whether they are both still in print.

27 Books on Spiritual Experience

There is an emphasis today on spiritual experience which is good providing it does not become cultish or sectarian. *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer published by Hodder is a fine book. *The Believer's Experience* by Erroll Hulse (Carey) £2.40 seeks to set the whole subject in perspective describing the different aspects and dealing in particular with the Charismatic movement of today.

The Advanced Christian's basic library

Having outlined mostly books in paperback which should be sought by the young Christian for his library we now need to look at the highest and best as far as useful permanent major books are concerned.

1 Thompson Chain Reference Bible A.V.

This volume is full of helpful information and is devoid of additions by way of artificial interpretations. This is in strong contrast to what is known as the Scofield Bible which is to be avoided because of a whole intricate system arbitrarily imposed on the Bible. Let us always start with a clean Bible without Roman or Protestant Popes imposing their notions. After that we can proceed to worthwhile commentaries which seek to expound the Scriptures in a thorough way.
Also commended is the New International Version by way of an up to date and reliable translation of the Bible.

2 Bible Survey

Very well presented in a most interesting fashion is *The Lion Handbook of the Bible,* £6.50. Highly commended is William Hendriksen's *Survey of the Bible,* E.P., £5.95.

3 Young's Analytical Concordance (£11.50; £14.50; £15.00; £30.00)

This is a large volume but a concordance is a necessity and one might as well go for the very best that one can find.

4 Matthew Henry's Commentary of the whole Bible

Matthew Henry was the son of the Puritan Philip Henry. His commentary on the whole Bible has never been exceeded for its all round ability to edify. Abridged versions are not to be trusted.

5 The New Bible Dictionary I.V.P. £10.75

This work is full of fine articles defining biblical terms, one of the best being that by Professor John Murray on The Covenant.

6 The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church Paternoster £10.00

This compendious volume is far from perfect but its usefulness and comprehensiveness cannot be denied. It enables the believer to find out something about the leading characters and events with regard to Church past and present. This may be regarded as luxury by some but let it be said that it is very useful to have a book like this which gives details about leading Christians and the main subjects. It is not only a reference book but makes for interesting reading.

7 Studies in the Sermon on the Mount Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones I.V.P. £5.95 (paper 1 vol.)

No sermon by our Lord is as full as that recorded in Matthew 5-7. Delineated is the Christian character and walk. What we have become by the new birth and spiritual growth within of the new person is of the utmost importance.

8 Good, wholesome commentaries on the main books of the Bible

Geoffrey B. Wilson's paperback commentaries on New Testament books published by Banner are very worthwhile as are the series on the whole Bible by I.V.P. J. C. Ryle on the Gospels is excellent. The list of detailed commentaries could be lengthy but it may help to mention a few. *William Hendriksen* has written well on *Matthew 15, Mark 6. 4-50* and *John 14.* If you can get *Geldenhuys* on *Luke* it is about the best to be found. *Hodge* is the most reliable and practical on the epistle to the *Romans* and not as difficult to read as *Professor Murray.* For those accustomed to theological language there is no commentary to equal that by John Murray. *Charles Hodge* is good on the two epistles to the *Corinthians* (£2.50) and *Philip Hughes* outstanding on *2 Corinthians. Hendriksen* has written on *Ephesians* (£2.50), *Galatians* (£2.50), *Colossians* (£2.50), *Philippians* (£2.25) and the two epistles to the *Thessalonians* (£2.50). *Philip Hughes* volume on *Hebrews* is recommended.

The preparation of this selection of books included consultation with experienced editors, publishers and pastors. One recently converted believer was asked to comment and several improvements were made as a result. Eric Lightfoot, manager of the Scripture Union Bookshop, Richmond, has contributed helpful advice and suggestions. The sharp insight possessed by Humphrey Mildred has been of much

assistance. He produced some thought-provoking comments of a high order. For instance he pointed out that there are some Christians who never read books and probably never will. Books are not everything. A good hearer of biblical exposition might well outpace well-read believers. What about multitudes of Christians in Communist countries who are without any Christian literature. Many do not have their own Bible? This results in long services and well trained memories.

Pastor Ron Edmonds of Long Beach California responded to Humphrey's comments with both agreement and dissent. It is true that many will be fully prepared for the life to come without reading. But, declares Ron, we should also recognise that our present age is one which exceeds all previous eras for the extent of biblical knowledge available, and for the volume of books published in all languages, and for hunger for the printed page. Is not this a time for an all out effort to give preference to books which are of substantial value and also to encourage foreign translation work?

Having made the concession that books are not everything let us also see that the freedom we enjoy to publish and distribute biblical material is of inestimable value—a gift of God to employ with utmost enthusiasm. As the heavens give way to the telescope and the earth to the research scientist so does the Bible give up her treasures to those who are filled with the Holy Spirit. Pen, ink and paper are the chief means of spreading the pearls of wisdom and the jewels of knowledge. Is not the earth destined to be filled with a knowledge of the glory of God? Is not the means the written Word itself and the main means of conveying knowledge the printing press? Certainly the power of conversion and of edification will always be preaching, but how would preachers fare themselves without the necessary tools?

While working on this bibliography I was impressed by the testimony of a visiting pastor from America. He said that he was converted at the age of ten. By fourteen he had read through the Bible completely five times and possessed an inward certainty of his call to the ministry. He declared that he experienced an insatiable appetite for Christian knowledge. The adult believers did not take him seriously. They did not study or read in earnest themselves. They could hardly regard the needs of a mere child as realistic. This young person found that a bookshop in the area stocked expository books which proved his salvation. He read volumes on doctrine and church history and in this way was able to establish himself in the faith and prepare himself for his future ministry.

And what about believers who have grown sloppy, careless and complacent about spiritual knowledge and who do not take seriously the command to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Perhaps you have never thought of building a library? Perhaps you have never thought deeply on the place and value of reading or the importance of being selective in your reading? I challenge you to look at your shelves. Does it consist of a line of topical easy to read paperbacks which happen to be the popular titles of the times?

Books so widely different in character need to be read at different speeds. Often we need to slow right down and try to understand and absorb the main points. It is not how much we read but how well we read that counts. Then there are books like the 1689 Confession which are studied rather than read.

Geoff Thomas preaching and the entrance side of the Caterham Baptist Church (see page 1).

Building a Library?

Some readers will not readily be able to purchase the books recommended in the pages 26 following. Titles can be obtained by post. For instance PURITAN REFORMED (see back cover for address) supply to their members a monthly catalogue of quality and comprehensiveness. At a glance it is possible to see what the publishers are producing. For details write to Puritan Reformed Discount Book Service.

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